



SEIUHealthcare®
United for Quality Care

February 16, 2023

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Hebron

UCONN Health, Respiratory Therapist

District 1199 New England

Before the Appropriations Committee

Good Afternoon Senator Osten, Representative Walker, and members of the Committee, my name is Stacy Pacheco. I am a Respiratory Therapist, and an 1199 Delegate at UCONN Health.

I love educating and helping my patients get better. I love when I am able to save someone's life. I love working with everyone- my work includes older adults to neonates. It's wonderful to watch small babies- who have come into the world too early- grow- knowing that I played a part in their survival.

Respiratory Therapists work all over the hospital. We run life support and life saving equipment with oxygen- for adults and neonates. We respond to EVERY Emergency- a few examples are births, code blues and stoke alerts.

Hospitals CAN NOT be run without respiratory. We are highly trained and educated to run life saving equipment.

I understand that the Governor's budget reduces what UCONN has requested. I am here to say that we need your help to increase the hospital's budget-- not decrease it.

We are very short staffed at UCONN. This staffing shortage has an impact on our patients. Working short staffed makes it difficult to retain excellent senior staff. Across the 1199 bargaining unit at UCONN Health, permanent staff must replace travelers.

Short staffing impacts workers' lives. Ours is a very stressful job. Our work stresses both our physical and mental health. Dealing with a lot of death is hard enough. It's worse when we have to run around short-staffed. Emergencies happen- we need enough staff to provide quality care- even when there are triplets in our NICU at the same time as there's a call to help in the ED.

I have a baby at home. When I get mandated because of short staffing, I don't come home to my husband and baby. Sometimes, my husband has to call out at work to care for the baby!

We need enough staff to do our job! Please support an increase in the budget so we can Expand Services to Save Lives at UCONN.